

Ohio House Transportation and Public Safety
House Resolution 13 – Proponent
March 16th, 2021

Tim Burga, President, Ohio AFL-CIO

Chairman Baldrige, Vice-Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the House committee on Transportation and Public Safety, thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony in favor of House Resolution 13. My name is Tim Burga, President of the Ohio AFL-CIO, representing nearly one million active and retired union members, including workers at the two Ohio refineries that are directly affected by this issue.

The state federation continues to advocate for an all-of-the-above energy strategy as we represent workers in all sectors of the energy economy. Our Executive Board adopted a resolution in support of Enbridge Line 5 during our meeting in February. House Resolution 13 urges Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer and Michigan Director of Natural Resources, Daniel Eichinger to make all efforts to keep Enbridge Line 5 operational.

Enbridge Line 5 stretches from Sarnia, Ontario to Superior, Wisconsin delivering along the way crude oil to the PBF Energy's Toledo Refinery Co. and the BP - Husky Toledo Refinery, in northwest, Ohio. This pipeline runs through the Straits of Mackinac and has been operating safely for over 65 years. In April of 2018, news of an anchor strike, which damaged the pipeline, but did not rupture it, caused the Michigan Attorney General, Dana Nessel, to file suit to shut down the pipeline.

Acknowledging the disastrous effects of a rupture and major spill, Enbridge has proposed funding a \$500 million tunnel and replacement pipeline deep under the Straits, while fighting in court to keep the current lines operational. Once construction on the tunnel and new line is completed, the current Line 5 pipeline would be permanently shut down and removed, alleviating many concerns of an environmental disaster. It should be stated that pipelines remain the safest and most efficient way to transport crude oil.

Premature closure of Enbridge Line 5 would have a negative impact on the northwest Ohio economy and threatens over 1,200 permanent jobs, in addition to hundreds of construction workers who are hired for continual safety and maintenance upgrades. These are good paying, family and community sustaining jobs. Without the crude oil from Line 5 these refineries will certainly close doing great economic harm to the workers and the surrounding communities.

On behalf of the workers who will be negatively impacted by its closure, we urge this body to pass House Resolution 13 and work with your counterparts in the Great Lakes region to keep Enbridge Line 5 operational. Please reach out to my office with any questions or comments you may have.